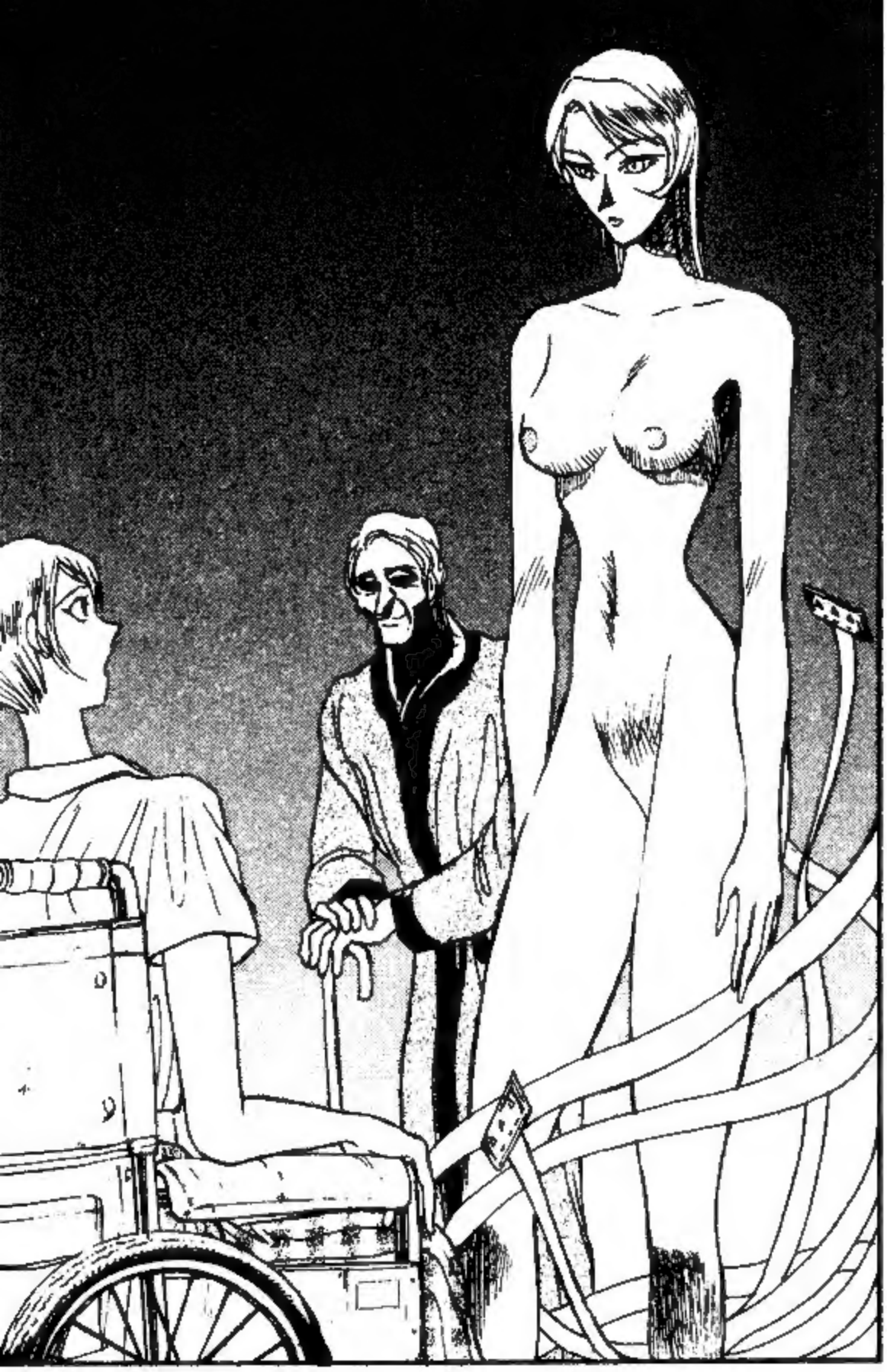

ACT IX :
KARAKURI *
THE PRINCESS OF
THE AUTOMATONS

"GUY AND LUCILLE"

YOU'RE AN ADULT NOW. WE ARE THE SAME SIZE.

I WAS WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT WITH MUCH ANTICIPATION!

YES. I AM VERY HAPPY WITH THE RESULT.

AP'TCHA SCULPTED HERSELF BY CAREFULLY STUDYING YOUR FACE.

SHE LOOKS LIKE YOUR REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR!

YOU UNDERSTAND ...

...EVEN IF I'M AN AUTOMATON, I CAN'T SHRINK MYSELF.

WHEN I MET AP'TCHA, SHE TOLD ME SHE WOULD REPLACE YOU TEN YEARS LATER AND THAT AT THAT TIME, THE ELIXIR WOULD BE MINE.

YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME SO THAT A DOLL CAN REPLACE ME?

BUT BARON GÜNTHER HAS RECOVERED HIS STRENGTH SINCE YOU'VE BEEN IN MY HANDS.

BY THE WAY... IT LOOKS LIKE YOU CHANGED YOUR HAIRSTYLE.

ALL THESE YEARS SPENT WAITING !!!

I ALMOST DIED IN THE MEANTIME!

IT'S TOO BAD.

YOU WERE MUCH MORE ELEGANT BEFORE!

SCHRIC

STOP!

THERE'S NO STONE IN MY BODY!

YES.

COME ON, REMOVE THE SOFT STONE FROM ELISE'S BODY!

HM?!

LUCILLE AND GUY CONFIRMED IT!!!

CLAC

SIR!

THEY'RE STILL HERE?

THE SHIROGANES ?!

INTRUDERS HAVE ENTERED THE BUILDING.

WHAT?

WELL, ADDRESS THE SITUATION QUICKLY! I PAY YOU MORE THAN ENOUGH TO EXPECT RESULTS!

AND THE GUARDS DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING.

OUR WELL-TRAINED GUARD DOGS WERE KILLED

TAH

BARON, I WILL NOW LEAVE FOR THE PRINCE'S.

OH!

WHEN YOU FIND THEM, KILL THOSE INTRUDERS!

IT'S YOUR JOB!!!

EVEN IF YOU'RE ONLY A PUPPET THAT MOVES DUE TO A MYSTERIOUS FORCE,

I'M FOREVER GRATEFUL.

YOU'VE ALWAYS TAKEN SUCH GOOD CARE OF ME DURING THESE 10 YEARS...

I'LL MISS YOU, AP'TCHA!

BAINES, GO WITH HER.

IT'S A PROMISE! SINCE YOU'LL LIVE AS A PRINCESS FROM NOW ON, I'LL FORGET YOU!

MR. BAINES, THE INTRUDERS MAY BE EXTREMELY POWERFUL.

I, TOO, SHALL FORGET YOU.

YOU MUST FORGET ME.

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S AN ATTACK FROM A MILITARY GROUP.

WE'VE GOT TWO DOZEN MEN ARMED TO THE TEETH.

WHAT?! YOU'RE GIVING THEM ALL TO ME?

I'M LEAVING YOU WITH THE AUTOMATONS I CREATED. USE THEM AS YOU WILL.

DO EXPECT AN ATTACK FROM A BIG ARMY!

IF MY INTUITION IS CORRECT...

MR. BAINES,

YOU MEAN I HAVE TO GO TO A BALL GIVEN IN ELISE'S HONOR AT LOHENSTADT?

HEY! ONE MOMENT !!!

AND YOU TWO?

WE HAVE BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO. WE WILL JOIN YOU AFTERWARDS.

WE'VE ALREADY MADE ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET IN JUST BY GIVING THEM YOUR NAME.

DEBUTANTE BALL!

AT THAT BALL OF...

BUT, LUCILLE, YOU ASKED ME NOT TO GET TOO CLOSE TO ELISE!

WHAT IF SHE SPOKE TO ME?

DO YOU FEEL SAD OR UNEASY? YOU JUST NEED TO MEOW LIKE A KITTEN!

BUT...

?

NO PROBLEM! TRY TO GET EVEN CLOSER TO HER DURING THE BALL.

...WE WILL COME TO THE BALL WITHOUT FAIL.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, NARUMI.

AND YOU, GUY, SINCE YOU GOT BACK WITH OLYMPIA, YOU'VE BEEN ACTING WEIRD TOO...

YOU'RE WEIRD, LUCILLE.

WHAT WITH CALLING PEOPLE EVERY-WHERE...

FINE.

I WON'T GET ANGRY EVEN IF YOU RUN LATE!

NO USE GETTING ANGRY.

SO...

I THINK NARUMI WILL GET VERY ANGRY...

But how am I gonna get there?

VRROOMM

BUT IF HE CAN'T FIGHT, HE'LL GET ANGRY TOO.

HE'LL SAY "WHY DO I HAVE TO FIGHT SUCH STRONG OPPONENTS?"

CLIC CLAC

HE WON'T BE HAPPY.

YES.

VLOM

TAN

HE'S SUCH A COMPLICATED BOY!

IT'S NOT EVEN COMPARABLE.

BUT THE MOST DIFFICULT PART IS UP TO US.

DA DA TA TA NN NN

ROGER.

APPARENTLY, A SQUAD OF WELL-ARMED COMMANDO-TYPES IS GONNA TRY TO GET IN HERE...

SO BE CAREFUL!

ANYWAY, THEY DON'T HAVE A CHANCE...

AS LONG AS...

IF THEY WANNA COME THROUGH THE HELIPORT, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM!

NOT LIKELY.

ARE THEY POLICEMEN?

THOSE GUYS WITH US!

WE'VE GOT...

ME, I WANNA QUICKLY FORGET ALL THIS AND GO HAVE FUN IN NICE.

YEAH... I DUNNO HOW THEY MOVE LIKE THAT. GIVES ME THE SHIVERS...

WHEN I SAW THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME, I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES.

PUT

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HUMANS BECOME QUITE WEAK WHEN PROMISED THINGS!

I IMAGINE THAT AN AUTOMATON, SEPARATED FROM THE MIDNIGHT CIRCUS, SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT THE STONE WAS IN THE PRINCESS'S BODY.

IT IS INDEED BARON GUNTHER'S CASTLE... EXACTLY AS THE PRINCESS SAID.

I CONFIRMED IT WHEN I FOLLOWED ELISE'S CAR WITH OLYMPIA.

THIS IS THE PLACE, LUCILLE.

THAT'S WHEN WE'LL BE NEEDED.

LUCILLE, HOW ARE WE GOING TO SAVE THE PRINCESS?

BECAUSE ALITOMATONS ALWAYS SEEK TO IMITATE HUMANS!

I THINK THE ALITOMATON IS SCHEMING TO TAKE THE PRINCESS'S PLACE...

HM... THEY MUST BE EXPECTING US.

I THINK I WILL CREATE A DIVERSION...

HOW ABOUT YOU, GUY? WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

NO! STOP! I BEG YOU!

SCHLAG!

... NARUMI WILL BE EVEN MORE ANGRY.

WE MUST HURRY, ELSE...

BUT... WE ARE OUT OF TIME.

YOU REMAIN CALM, GUY. THAT'S VERY GOOD.

AH?

AFTER YOUR DEATH, WE WILL DISSECT YOUR BODY AT OUR LEISURE TO LOOK FOR THE STONE.

DON'T WORRY, ELISE. THE INJECTION WORKS VERY WELL AND YOU WON'T FEEL A THING.

BARON GÜNTHER !!!

THERE'S NO STONE IN MY BODY!

NOOO!

SO LONG, ELISE!!!

NARUMI!

BROM

WHAT'S HAPPENING ?!

MMM

FIRE!

THEY'RE HERE!

TA TA TA

GHH ...

AH!

BRRRAT

BLAAM!

AAAH!

SURROUND THEM!

COME ON!!!

WHO ARE...

THESE GUYS?!

WHO... THE HECK ARE THEY?

...

BLAM!

BRAT

DADADA

M-1026-A

GOOH!

ARGH!

OH, YEAH? THIS IS PROOF THAT YOU'RE NOT VERY CURIOUS!

DADADA

LUCILLE... AS A SHIROGANE, I WAS NEVER TAUGHT SUCH OUTRIGHT VIOLENT METHODS...

UK

YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY HAVNG A LOT OF FUN...

AREN'T YOU?

IN THE LONG HISTORY OF SHIROGANES,

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY FIGHTS OF THIS KIND.

DANCE FOR ME TODAY...

PERFECT... I'M GOING TO HAVE SOME FUN TOO.

OH, HERE ARE NEW CUSTOMERS!

DON'T THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE WHEN YOU'RE FIGHTING!

OLYMPIA!

ZZZ

BLACKOUT